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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

IMPLICATIONS OF CHINESE MILITARY AID TO PAKISTAN

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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

State Dept. review completed

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
16 August 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM*

Implications of Chinese Military
Aid to Pakistan

Summary

Communist China in the past year became Pakistan's major supplier of military hardware. So far, Peking has provided perhaps a dozen IL-28 Beagle jet light bombers, about 50 MIG-19 Farmer jet fighters, and roughly 100 tanks. Artillery, small arms, and ammunition have also been sent. More deliveries apparently are still to be made.

China's willingness to provide some of its slim stock of relatively modern aircraft and armor demonstrates the value Peking puts on its ties with Rawalpindi. The Chinese see this aid as the price they must pay to keep alive a marriage of convenience based largely on a common antipathy to India. The Chinese recognize that their military assistance will lead to increased tension between Pakistan and India and will force New Delhi to split its forces between the front facing Pakistan and that facing China. The Chinese also know that their support causes strains between Pakistani President Ayub and the US and complicates Moscow's efforts to increase its influence in the subcontinent.

*Prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated with the Office of Research and Reports and the Office of National Estimates.

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Pakistan turned to Peking for military assistance because of a need to rebuild its armed forces as quickly as possible after the border war with India in the fall of 1965.

Although hopeful it can diversify its sources of arms and avoid dependence on any one power, Pakistan is determined to improve its armed forces to the point where it will be able to defend at least West Pakistan in any future hostilities. As long as this is true and meaningful amounts of hardware are not obtainable elsewhere, Pakistan will have to rely heavily on the Chinese.

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Pakistan Seeks Aid

1. The basis for the Chinese military aid program to Pakistan was laid in the fall of 1965 during the war along the Pakistan-India border. The war was a sobering experience for Pakistan. Nourished by years of hatred and contempt for the Indians, the Pakistanis entered the fight with high hopes. Their military resources were not up to the job, however. Losses in equipment were extremely high for a country which could do very little to replace it after the US shut off military aid to both sides.

2. The Pakistani armed forces emerged from the war critically short of military equipment, arms, and ammunition. For example, the air force lost 10-15 percent of its aircraft, leaving a force of roughly 100 jet fighters and 20 jet light bombers, and the remainder of its inventory was crippled by a lack of spare parts. Battle losses cut deeply into the tank force, and all services were short of ammunition.

3. Even as the fighting went on, the Ayub government was making frantic efforts to obtain, from whatever source possible, the arms it could no longer get from the US or the UK. There is evidence that Communist China provided some military assistance during this period, including antiaircraft guns, smaller weapons, and ammunition. Some also came in from Turkey, Indonesia, and Iran. Failure to get more doubtless contributed to Pakistan's willingness to sign a cease-fire.

4. The end of the war did not end the Pakistani search for arms. The first imperative in Pakistani policy remained: the country must keep pace militarily with the Indians. Shut off from the usual suppliers and determined because of their wartime experience to diversify sources of supply, the Pakistanis began to shop around. Their general attitude was summed up by Ayub when he told the US ambassador that he would take the needed weapons "even from the devil himself." The search turned up a number of countries willing but not able to fill Pakistan's

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needs, while those that could, would not. The Pakistanis did, however, find a receptive audience in Peking.

5. Arrangements for the military aid program now unfolding were probably worked out during a visit to Peking in early October 1965, by Ayub's defense coordinator, Ghulam Faruque. He later stated that the Chinese offered to ship tanks to Pakistan and claimed they offered to construct a tank factory in Pakistan. They also offered to supply an unspecified number of MIG-19 Farmer jet fighters and to provide technical assistance to integrate them into the Pakistani Air Force.

The Chinese Come Through

6. Deliveries of major items of military hardware negotiated by the Faruque mission began early in 1966. Tank deliveries by sea were made in February,

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8. The Chinese appear to have delivered about 100 T-34 and T-54 tanks to Pakistan.

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9. Other Chinese assistance includes artillery weapons and equipment, small arms, and ammunition.

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10. The Pakistanis may be seeking additional Chinese military assistance. [redacted] at least two Pakistani military delegations, which included high-level army and air force officers, have visited Communist China during this summer. Ghulam Faruque was again in Peking in late July, and the subject of arms assistance probably figured prominently in his mission. It is possible that the main concern of these delegations was with maintenance and replacement of equipment the Chinese have already contracted to deliver, but the subject of further aid may well have come up.

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11. The Pakistanis, however, have continued their attempts to develop other sources. The US decision in February to resume shipments only of nonlethal military equipment does not, the Pakistanis argue, meet their needs. The UK resumed sales of lethal weapons to the subcontinent in February, but this has not proved as helpful to Pakistan as to India, which has a large inventory of UK equipment. The Pakistanis have bought some small arms and ammunition from Western European sources. [redacted]

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[redacted] Pakistan may also be acquiring from Iran most of the 90 Canadian-made jet fighters Tehran purchased from West Germany earlier this year. [redacted]

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[redacted] as many as 60 of these have probably already reached Pakistan. Talks with the USSR have not yet gone beyond the exploratory phase.

12. President Ayub does not view the acceptance of Chinese aid as in any way limiting Pakistan's freedom to carry out an independent foreign policy.

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[redacted] Foreign policy pronouncements from Rawalpindi also suggest an attempt to maintain an independent foreign policy. Chinese moral and material backing in Pakistan's struggle against India has, however, improved relations between the two countries.

Peking's Motivations

13. The military aid delivered to Pakistan is the largest China has ever provided a non-Communist state, which amply demonstrates the value Peking places on its relations with Rawalpindi. In the past year the Chinese have suffered a number of serious setbacks in their foreign relations, and they may see assistance to Pakistan as assuring them at least one important friend in the non-Communist world. There are other more tangible advantages. From China's point of view, a militarily strong Pakistan poses a continuing threat to the common adversary India, requiring New Delhi to divert forces that could otherwise be deployed along the ever-sensitive Sino-Indian frontier. The Chinese also know that their support causes strains between Ayub and the US and complicates Soviet efforts to follow up the Tashkent declaration and to increase Moscow's influence in the subcontinent.

14. The assistance to Pakistan in part reflects Peking's increased capacity to produce relatively modern military equipment. The Chinese are believed to be manufacturing 15 to 20 MIG-19s a month and at least 300 T-54 tanks a year. The Chinese do not yet make IL-28s, but they have about 250 which were received from the Soviet Union more than seven years ago.

15. The Chinese may also see longer term benefits to be derived from their aid program. They may reason that the helping hand extended to Pakistan in its hour of greatest need will be remembered long after Ayub has gone. In more practical terms, the Chinese, by becoming the major supplier of military hardware, may have a continuing role as a source of replacements and spare parts. Furthermore, about 200 Pakistani military personnel, including pilots, have already been sent to China to be trained in the use of Chinese equipment. The Chinese probably hope to gain some residual good will from this training, even if government-to-government relations change.

16. The provision of this assistance to Pakistan supports other recent indications that the Chinese do not regard a Sino-US war as imminent. They seem considerably less nervous now than they appeared to be a year ago over the possibility of an early US attack. Civil defense and psychological preparations in China have subsided, and [redacted] Peking tends to discount the possibility of an early war.

Implications for India

17. The Indian reaction has been predictably shrill. New Delhi has already voiced serious concern over Pakistan's acquisition of arms from China, and many Indian officials see it as confirmation of their long-standing suspicions that there has been far-reaching Sino-Pakistani plotting against India. Indian military leaders profess to believe that Chinese deliveries, together with equipment from other sources, have actually boosted Pakistani armed strength above levels existing before fighting broke out last September.

18. Substantial Chinese assistance to Pakistan will almost certainly increase Indian pressure on the Soviet Union for additional military hardware. New Delhi will also point to the deliveries from China in an effort to dissuade the US from providing any additional aid to Pakistan.

19. India has also voiced fears that Sino-Pakistani military collaboration goes beyond the military aid program. Officials in New Delhi, for example, claim that Peking has secretly agreed to assist Rawalpindi in a nuclear weapons program. So far, there is no confirmation of these rumors.

Conclusions

20. Despite Chinese aid and the outwardly cordial ties which bind Peking and Rawalpindi, both doubtless regard their relationship as a marriage of convenience, tactically expedient but of doubtful durability. In Chinese eyes, Ayub is a Western-educated bourgeois nationalist who cannot be trusted over the long pull. Peking's doubts about the Pakistanis were increased when US economic aid was resumed and Ayub fired left-leaning Foreign Minister Bhutto, long an advocate of close relations with China. Even the long-range prospects of advancing Chinese interests in Pakistan once Ayub is gone must be recognized in Peking as chancy business.

21. The Pakistanis, for their part, clearly have reservations about the Chinese.

Paki-
stani military leaders in particular probably recognize that the aircraft obtained from China are in some respects inferior to those which are supplied to foreign powers by the US and the USSR. The Pakistanis have made it clear that they do not want ever again to become overly dependent on any one supplier and will probably continue to shop around, hoping to limit the degree to which they must rely on Peking. Pakistan, however, will undoubtedly feel compelled to turn to China as long as the arms race with India continues and no alternative sources of meaningful amounts of military hardware are available.

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15 August 1966

Talking Paper on "Implications of Chinese Military Assistance to Pakistan"

1. This memorandum was prepared in response to a request from the DDI.
2. Its main conclusions:
 - a. That Pakistan was and will remain willing to accept arms from "the devil" in order to keep abreast with India.
 - b. China--wishing to keep Pakistan alive as a military threat to a common enemy, India--has undertaken its largest nonbloc military